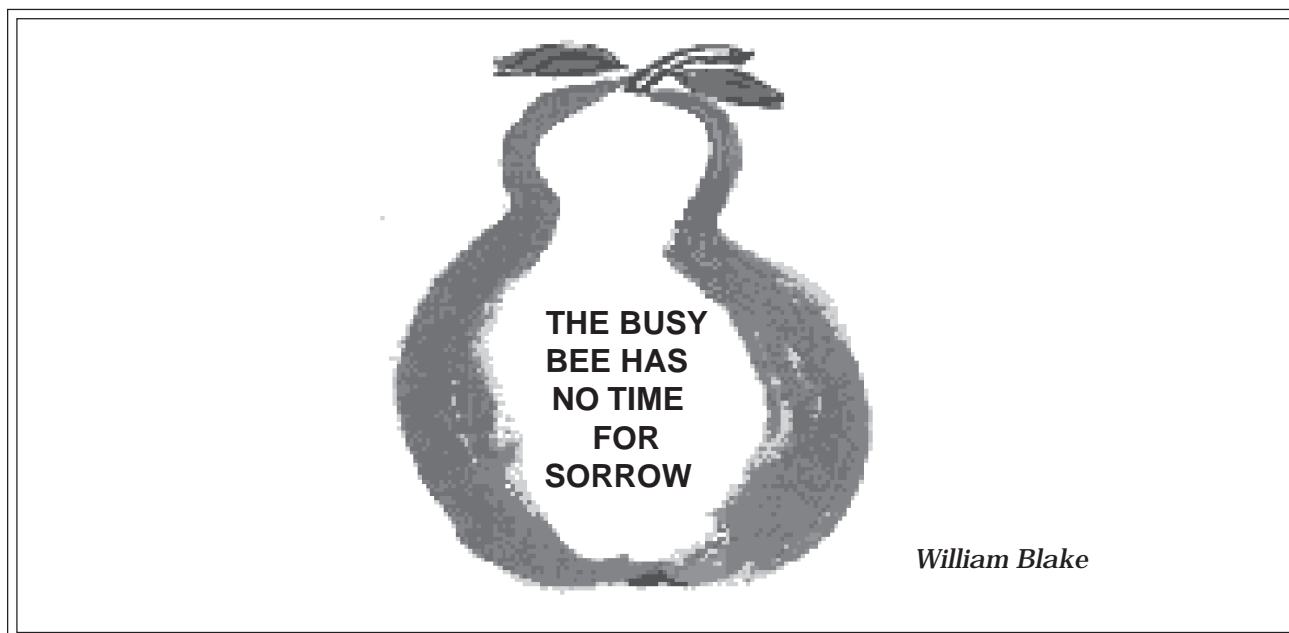


BEING EVEN TEMPERED

Objective: *To consider how I feel, and how by seeing and accepting my feelings, we may be able to become more positive in my attitude when things seem difficult*

Key Words: *miserable, behaviour, mood, detention, bullying, leadership*

QUOTATION/THEME FOR THE WEEK

Discuss what William Blake meant. Have you ever found when you were sad and accepted your feelings, then you did something practical like helping someone, your mood changed and you felt more cheerful?

SILENT SITTING

Steps 1, 4 (See page 40)

Step 5: Think of a time when you felt cross ...

Imagine it is now ...

Perhaps you feel tired ... Or you don't feel very well ...

Or something has annoyed you ...

Think about how you feel ...

Imagine yourself walking away from the person or thing which is making you cross ...

Now imagine yourself drinking a cool glass of water ...

You are feeling a little better ...

Give yourself a pat on the back for not losing your temper ...

Now you feel much better.

Step 6.

STORY TELLING

BAD MOOD MOLLY IN THE MORNING

by Cynthia Bach

Molly woke up to find the rain pattering down her bedroom window. “Oh no,” she said to herself. “We won’t be able to have sports practice today. I’ll never get the chance to be Captain of the Blue Team.”

Molly felt very miserable and even more so when she saw the time and realised she was late. Why hadn’t she set her alarm clock? She had been so sure she would wake up early. Jumping out of bed, she grabbed her school uniform and headed for the bathroom, only to stub her toe on the chest of drawers. Oh, that did hurt! It wouldn’t have done her running much good, she thought sourly as she reached the bathroom, only to find that her young brother, Jimmy, had got there first.

“Hurry up, Jimmy. You know I have to be in school before you!” Molly called through the door. The only answer was the sound of Jimmy cleaning his teeth and water running. After what seemed ages, Jimmy came out grinning. Molly pushed him aside and began to get her things sorted out. Then she saw that Jimmy had done his usual trick of leaving toothpaste all over the basin.

“Oh, the pest,” she said. “Now I’ll have to clean it up before I can wash.” And she stamped her foot in anger.

Eventually she was ready and came down for breakfast, only to find Jimmy eating his toast from her favourite plate. “What are you doing with *my* plate? Boys don’t want plates with roses on. Go and get another one,” she shouted crossly.

Their mother came in with some more toast just as Molly snatched the plate from Jimmy who pulled a face in return. “For goodness sake, children. What sort of behaviour is this? Do you have to fight first thing in the morning? Is that the way to start the day? You’d have something to complain about if you had no breakfast, like some people.”

Molly sat down sulkily and ate her breakfast in silence, then picked up her things ready to go to school. “I don’t know why I am bothering to take my sports stuff if it’s going to rain all day.”

“Oh dear, you have got out of bed on the wrong side this morning,” said mother. “The rain will probably stop later.”

“It won’t,” wailed Molly as she rushed out through the front door.

Molly missed her usual bus. The next one came late. She arrived just in time for the school bell and felt even more grumpy in the first two lessons. She did not answer any questions, but knew Miss Evans would make everyone answer questions in the next lesson.

Molly wasn't in the mood for answering questions, so she stared out of the window. It had stopped raining, but the sky was very grey and a wind was blowing. "It's bound to start raining again soon," she thought feeling as gloomy as the grey sky. "It's just my luck not to have the chance of being Captain of the Blue Team. If we don't have sports practice, there's no hope at all." Her mind drifted on around these pessimistic thoughts until she was brought back to earth with a jolt.

"Molly! Are you in this class, or on another planet?" called out Miss Evans who had already spoken to her twice without getting a reply and who was feeling a little bad tempered herself that morning.

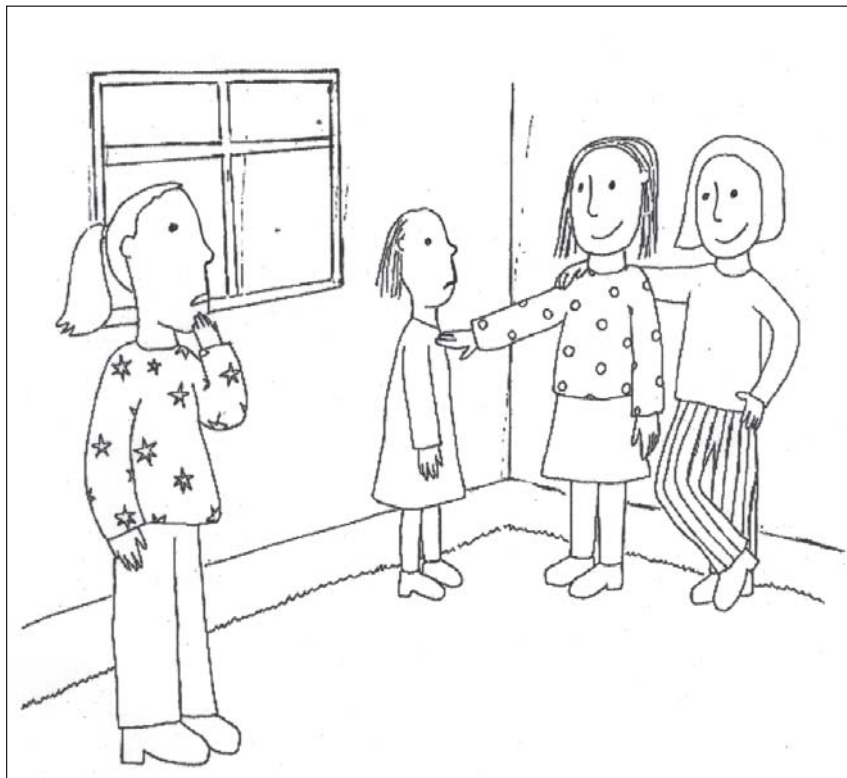
"Oh, I might as well be," responded Molly before she could stop herself.

"Really," said Miss Evans sharply. "Unless you can give me an answer now, you will do detention tomorrow. Now, what is the answer?"

Molly realised she had not been listening and went red. "Could you please tell me the question again, Miss Evans?" she replied, politely this time before she really got into trouble. Miss Evans repeated the question, but Molly couldn't answer it correctly because she had been day dreaming. Now she felt embarrassed that she had let herself down.

At last it was lunch time. Molly slid out of the classroom, not wanting to talk to anyone. The rain had stayed away and it was beginning to look brighter, although it was very wet underfoot. She took her sandwiches to the dining room and sat and watched her friends chatting happily together. She would have liked to have joined in, but her grumpy feelings somehow stopped her. Then she went to look at the

condition of the sports field. It didn't look very hopeful.



Hearing the bell go, Molly walked slowly back towards the classroom. Some girls in front of her were arguing. The two bigger girls pushed the smaller one roughly. As the second bell went, one of them gave her a shove and she fell over. They ran off leaving her lying on the ground.

Molly ran over to her. She was crying. "I can't get up. It's my ankle, it hurts so. I twisted it. I'll be late for my class."

Molly looked at the ankle which had started to swell. "You may have sprained it," she said. "Don't try to get up. I'll get the P.E. Teacher. She'll know what to do. Why did they push you like that?"

"Oh, they are always picking on someone, I was told. I've just moved here and have come from another school. I wish I had not had to now." The girl started crying again.

"Don't upset yourself," Molly felt sorry for the girl and had quite forgotten her own problems. "I'll get some help for you. What's your name?"

"I'm Trudie," she said, trying to smile.

"Afterwards I'll come with you to report the incident, Trudie. We can't let them get away with bullying. We will *have* to report it."

"Please don't say anything about them. I don't want to tell anyone. They said that it would only be worse for me if I did." Trudie's eyes widened in fear.

"Don't worry, Trudie. Somebody will go home with you this evening. And if you are that frightened, someone can meet you and walk with you to school as well. But it must be reported and sorted out. They will have to have a meeting and talk about their behaviour, either with the teacher or with a counsellor who will come to see them specially. They may have problems themselves to talk about, or they may just have been thoughtless. But you can't let them think it's all right to behave like that. They will just do it to others too. It's not only for yourself. It's for everybody's sake."

"All right," said Trudie. "As long as you stay with me."

"I will," Molly reassured her. "Now I must fetch someone to sort out your ankle."

The P.E. Teacher examined the ankle. Trudie would have to be taken to the hospital to check that nothing was broken.

Molly was late for her lesson that afternoon and she had Miss Evans again! Molly apologised and explained what had happened. Surprisingly Miss Evans smiled and thanked Molly. Molly was amazed at the difference in her.

After the class was the sports practice. The P.E. teacher called Molly over. "Thanks for helping Trudie. She was in some pain, but I don't think her ankle is broken. It's lucky you fetched help for her. I believe there is also another matter to be dealt with. Trudie mentioned it and I am glad you supported her so that it can be sorted out. We can't have that sort of behaviour going on in the school. Now Molly, I would like you to be Captain of the Blue Team for the rest of this school term. You have already displayed good leadership qualities. I am sure you will do a good job."

"Oh yes, I will. Thank you," exclaimed Molly her eyes shining. She really couldn't believe her ears. A day that had seemed so dismal and dreary, had now turned out so perfectly! She was determined to do her best for the Blue Team. They would play in as many events on Sports Day as they possibly could, she would make sure of that. Win or lose, they would play well.

So Bad Mood Molly in the morning, turned into Good Mood Molly in the afternoon and from now on, she was determined to try to stay that way.

QUESTIONS:

1. What name would you give to this story?
2. What did Molly want to happen at school?
3. Why was she in a bad mood when she woke up?
4. In what way did Molly contribute to her bad luck?
5. How many people were affected by Molly's bad mood?
6. When did her mood change?
7. How did you feel when you heard the story?
8. Did it remind you of anything?
9. What did the story mean to you?
10. What would you do if you were bullied or you knew someone else who was?

GROUP SINGING

WHEN WE FIND WE'RE IN A MOOD

(music and lyrics by Sara John)

When we find we're in a mood,
Or we're just plain miserable and sad,
Then take a deep breath and say, everything's okay.

*(Chorus) It doesn't help if we wallow in the feeling.
Let's get out now and have a brighter thought.
'Cause we only make things worse
When we moan around and curse
And we're happy when there's fun around the corner.*

When we find we're in a rush,
Or we can't get together what we've planned,
Then take a deep breath and say, everything's okay.

(Chorus) It doesn't help if we wallow in the feeling...

When we find we're in a mood,
Or we're just plain miserable and sad,
Then take a deep breath and say, everything's okay.
Then take a deep breath and say, everything's okay.

That's right!

GROUP ACTIVITY

1. HAPPY INCIDENTS TO SHARE

Soft background music can be played to aid relaxation.

Same gender pairs:

One child (A) in each pair lies flat on the floor and the partner (B) sits beside.

(A) places a hand on (B's) arm.

Keeping eyes shut, (A) quietly tells (B) a story of a happy incident, such as: a trip to the zoo, or a friend's birthday, etc.

After five minutes the partners change places.

2. Draw a cartoon about a child being bullied and the action you would take to stop the bullying.

Close the lesson: If the teacher wishes, the lesson can be closed by asking the children to form a circle and say, "We can let bad feelings go when we see them and accept them first."

Extension Exercise / Links to Other Subjects: Through discussion and activities, the teacher and children can develop a scrapbook entitled, "Bullies are weak, friends are strong".

It can include stories, pictures, poems, articles, cartoons, etc. on why bullying is unacceptable and what one should do, as well as how to be a good friend. The content of the scrapbook can be shared with other classes in a school assembly, or for an end of term concert.